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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/07/2017
TAGS: [SENV](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [MU](#)
SUBJECT: CITES REMAINS PENDING BEFORE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS

REF: A. MUSCAT 260
[1](#)B. MUSCAT 247

Classified By: Ambassador Gary A. Grappo, reasons 1.4 b and d

[1](#)1. (C) On April 2, the Ambassador raised the issue of Oman's accession to the Convention on the International Trade of Endangered Species (CITES) with Humud al-Busaidi, Secretary General for the Council of Ministers. Busaidi stated that the Council had a considerable backlog of pending legislation to work through, and noted that cabinet ministers had not assembled for two months prior to meeting on March 27 on account of the Sultan's "Meet the People" tour. (Note: Several ministers normally accompany the Sultan on his extended visits within Oman as part of his annual tour to gauge citizen concerns. End note.) While Busaidi was unable to provide a date or agenda for the Council's next meeting, he volunteered that UN conventions are routinely and quickly approved by the Council once on the agenda. The Ambassador urged the Council to take up the CITES legislation as soon as possible.

[1](#)2. (C) Comment: The Embassy remains optimistic that CITES accession is on track. In a recent conversation with the Ambassador, Dr. Salem al-Ismaily, Executive President for the Omani Center for Investment Promotion and Export Development, stated that the Sultan had reiterated to his cabinet that passage of necessary regulations to implement the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement remained a top priority. We expect that CITES accession, while not explicitly part of the FTA, will move expeditiously as part of that directive. End comment.
GRAPPO